Cases of Hottentot women giving birth in the fields and cheerfully carrying the babe home in the evening or delivering herself in a warm cow stall (66), cannot be considered average. Sufficient number of

66. Th. Hahn, Die Nama-Hottentotten. Ein Beitrag zur südafrikanischen Ethnographie (Globus, vol. XII, 1867.)

cases of Boer women giving birth under equally primitive conditions while traveling are known, but that would not allow one to draw conclusions about the customs of our race. Birth among the Hottentots, as with us, occurs in orderly circumstances and is an event they prepare for carefully.

Whoever can, has an experienced midwife, even if she must come from far away. The Hottentots give this important woman various names. She is either the !kx̃o·ris, i.e., "she who catches the child (!kx̃oǂ)," or the ≠nũ·ris, i.e., "she who sits there (≠nũ)," waiting hours, even half a day until she can take hold. Corresponding to our chief midwife, insofar as she makes the decisions, is the *!kx̃ai·/naēaos, "the woman who cuts the umbilical cord."

Usually there are several women present at a birth and not merely as observers. When the first strong pains begin, the woman in labor lies on her left side. The women now group themselves, as far as I could determine, in the following way. One sits behind the woman in labor at the head of the bed and supports her shoulders and back with one knee to keep her in a half-upright, half-lying position on her side. Opposite the first sits a second woman who puts her right arm around the upper part of the woman's body. Her job is to bend the woman's upper body forward as soon as a pain begins, to hold the head against the breast and to place a cloth on the woman's mouth [219] so that she cannot scream out. It would mean the death of the child if the mother should lie on her back or stretch her legs. Her left leg, bent at the knee, lies flat on the floor. The right leg, also bent, is straight up, its thigh spread out as far as possible, its foot braced against the knee of the left leg. The third woman, who sits near the foot of the bed opposite the woman in labor, has two jobs. With her left hand she must hold the woman's leg in the position just described. Her right hand presses on the abdomen with spread thumbs against the uterus to control the progress of the delivery. The old woman, who takes her place opposite the third woman behind the woman in labor, has charge of the delivery. Her left

hand, constantly feeling, lies on the buttocks of the woman in labor. 844
Her hand follows the forward movement of the child's head across the coccyx to the perineum and on to the vaginal opening. As soon as her right hand, which is between the legs of the prone woman, feels that the head is coming through, she has the woman bear down as hard as she can at the next pain.

Once the head is out, they do not wait for more labor, but draw the child out, taking it by the chin.

The only definite interference in the delivery which they attempt 845
is enlarging the vaginal opening if the child is not delivered after strong labor-pains. First they try to enlarge it sideways. If that does not help, they stretch it lengthwise. In one case four women are supposed to have had their fingers in the vulva. If this stretching is not successful, then the perineum is deliberately torn, often up to the anus, to make room. No attempt is made to heal such a tear, because, as a Hottentot woman explained to me as an obvious fact, the path of the next child would be blocked.

All the motions of the hands are done under the skin blanket which 844
covers the woman in labor. During the delivery she is given soup to strengthen her. Assistance at birth is exclusively the domain of women, whether old or young, mothers or not.

Here and there they vaguely connect the east wind with the labor of [821]
a woman. When the east wind blows, one can sometimes hear the question: "Which woman has delivered today?"

[220] Cutting the umbilical cord is done without delay. The cord is tied approximately in the middle with sinew or bast from a thorn tree and then the long end thread is fastened to the left leg of the mother to prevent the cord from slipping back. Sometimes they tie the thread to a pole. Right behind the place where it is tied the cord is cut, leaving the knot on the mother's end at the cord. A span's width from the navel of the child (they measure between their spread thumb and middle finger), [804]
the cord is tied again and cut. The mother is given some of the blood that drips from the cut, if she is bleeding too heavily.

The old woman who had charge of the delivery cuts the cord. She [759]
is also the only one who is paid. The usual payment was two goats for a boy and one for a girl.

They do not differentiate between dead children and seemingly [787]
dead ones and do not know any methods for resuscitation. Prophetic gifts are ascribed to children who are born with a "helmet," //ga·baras (lateral clicking sound), our good luck caul.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
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The early writers
164 speak of sore breasts, ophthalmias, and umbilical hernias as the common
177 diseases, and coughs appear to have been frequent. After the advent of the white man, smallpox, measles and less cleanly diseases swept the country like plagues. An epidemic of smallpox in 1713 totally wiped out many of the Cape Hottentot groups, and greatly weakened the numerical strength and organization of others; a similar outbreak in 1755 again decimated them, and to add to their woes leprosy attacked them; while in 1864 large numbers of Naman died from smallpox. At the present time, syphilis, another infection due to the white man, is widespread among them; tuberculosis, fevers, paralysis, ophthalmias, and chicken-pox are other common diseases, while during the cold season they catch severe colds, and, like all the other inhabitants of South Africa, they suffered heavily in the influenza pandemic of 1918.[1]

753 All maladies, says Mrs. Hoernlé,[2] are divided by the Hottentots
757 into two groups. First there is */aisena*, "sickness," which they regard
[826] as due to some misplacement of the internal organs. According to their notions of anatomy these organs have weird ways of wandering about the body. The treatment is massage, to restore each organ to its proper place; and in such massage the Hottentots are very highly skilled. The other group of diseases is called by the same name as death, *ǂop*, and in the treatment of these a great variety of herbs and roots is employed. Some of the herbs are considered so valuable that journeys are made from tribe to tribe to get them, although among the herbs found in any particular territory there are always
• [759] some which may serve as substitutes. But however powerful the remedy may be, if it is to be effective it must always be applied by someone who has had the disease and recovered. The most effective medicine will fail unless used by the right person.[3]

757 The principal diseases described to Mrs. Hoernlé as receiving
784 this latter treatment are *//autas*, paralysis, *//keis*, "fever," *ǂurub*,
783 varicose veins, and */nomis*, lupus. Any man falling sick from any one of these or the other diseases called *ǂop* becomes */nau*, and the treatment adopted to cure him is exactly similar to that described in the remarriage ceremony. The patient is secluded in a hut, and

[1] Laidler, "The Magic Medicine of the Hottentots," 433; Theal, *History of S. Africa before 1795*, ii, 431 ff., iii, 28, 36 ff.; Nolte, "Krankheiten . . . der Nama," 630; Schinz, op. cit., 99; von François, op. cit., 215–16; Schultze, op. cit., 227; *Official Year Book of the Union*, No. 8; 983–6 *passim*.

[2] "Conception of Inau among the Hottentots," 77–9.

[3] Cf. Schultze, op. cit., 213.

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a special animal, a sheep or a goat, is slaughtered. The officiating person makes some cuts in the patient's body over the part affected. With a small horn he cups blood from these cuts, mixes it together, and adds some of the blood of the slaughtered animal. Next he scrapes some dirt from his arm and mixes it with the blood, to which he also adds the ingredients of the vegetable medicines. This mixture he finally rubs into the cuts. Till these have healed the patient must observe the customary */nau* restrictions: he must remain in the hut, he must not touch anyone with his hands, nor must he touch cold water or the pots. When at last the cuts are healed, the officiating person cleanses him in the customary manner, he puts on a set of new clothes and gives the old ones to his attendant, the usual purification meal is held, and the fire in the hut cleared away and renewed. Finally the reintroduction to the duties of ordinary life takes place in the usual manner, and the patient is free to mix with other people once more.

No other writer on the Hottentots mentions this particular grouping of diseases. It is implied, however, in Laidler's statement that there is a classification into minor and major troubles; but he adds that the former are treated by the herbalists, while in the latter the first step is consultation with the "witch doctor" (i.e. the */gai aob*) who is usually himself also a herbalist.[1] He makes no reference to the fact, explicitly noted by both Mrs. Hoernlé and Schultze, that certain diseases can only be treated by people who have themselves had the disease and recovered from it. Many writers, as we have seen, corroborate the calling in of the */gai aob* in case of illness, and it would seem that one of his ordinary duties is to discover the source of the sickness. His method of doing so is nowhere clearly described, although Laidler vaguely mentions divination by examination of the entrails of a slaughtered animal. Where the patient is held to have been bewitched, the */gai aob* also undertakes to cure him. His treatment in such cases, in addition to the "extracting" of the foreign bodies thought to be causing the illness, is apparently similar to that employed in the diseases known as *!op*, since, as we have seen, the dirt scraped from his body is an essential ingredient in any medicine he gives. It is obvious, from what has just been noted, that he does not undertake the treatment of every kind of disease.

All this implies that more than one class of persons may be called in to treat the sick and injured, the healer differing according to

[1] Op. cit., 433, 434.

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759 the nature of the complaint. But there is nowhere any full statement as to who all the persons are who may respectively act in this way. The only mention of professional healers, apart from the "herbalists" referred to by Laidler, is Kolb's statement that in every Cape Hottentot kraal there was a man chosen by the old men of the kraal to act as physician and surgeon, because of his knowledge of herbs and surgical and medical treatment. His office was not hereditary. On his death the old men selected another man with similar qualifications; and if no one suitable could be found in their own kraal, they fetched him in from another. In the meantime such of the old women as had a knowledge of herbs and could make the surgical cuts undertook the treatment of the sick.[1] How far this statement can be regarded as accurate in all its details is difficult to say. The whole social aspect of medicine among the Hottentots has been somewhat ignored, and it is not always possible to reconcile the different statements as to the practitioners employed. Nor, except in the case of the *top* diseases, can we ascertain clearly how far the practitioners profess or are believed to cure all diseases, or whether they specialize on particular cases. And, apart from the account given by Mrs. Hoernlé, there is no full description of the ceremonies attaching to the cure or attempted cures.

757 On the actual methods of treatment adopted we have more adequate information, thanks mainly to the detailed descriptions given by Schultze and Laidler, as well as the older writers such as Graevenbroeck and Kolb.[2] Massage, as we have just seen, is widely used for diffuse pains attributed to the wanderings of the internal organs, the object being to restore each organ to its proper place. We have also [842 previously noted its use in connection with pregnancy, and, according 841] to Laidler, unfruitful women or those behind their time with menstruation are likewise massaged on the abdomen, in the former case with a downward, in the latter with a rolling movement.

752 The knowledge of surgery is limited.[3] Dislocations are reduced by rubbing the joint briskly with fat and then moving the limb up and down vigorously. A broken limb is first wrapped in skin, care being taken to allow free circulation of the blood; then narrow splints of wood are tied round it to form a sort of sheath, and left until the 752 bone is firm again. Amputation of the finger joint, a common practice 304 in the past, was cleverly performed with the aid of a ligature. Kolb

[1] Op. cit., 44–5.
[2] Schultze, op. cit., 211–14; 233–6; Laidler, op. cit., 424–36; Graevenbroeck, op. cit., 29 ff.; Kolb, op. cit., 148–55; cf. also Nolte, op. cit., 630–1.
[3] Kolb, op. cit., 149–53; Schultze, op. cit., 211–14; Laidler, op. cit., 436–7.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
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752 278 a solution of tobacco juice diluted in water as an emetic. Tobacco juice taken from the stem of the pipe may also be rubbed into the bite or into a cut made near it, and Schultze seems to think that this really may be an effective antidote. Another favourite remedy is white [825] potassium chlorate, in the form of the inspissated urine and fæces of the dassie purified by the action of the atmosphere, which is rubbed into scarified snake bites and scorpion stings.

752 The immunization against snake bite reported of the Bushmen is also practised by the Hottentots.[1] One of Laidler's informants, the "poison doctor" for the northern parts of Little Namaqualand, learned his profession from his father, who in his turn had been similarly taught. He stated that when he was a boy—and to begin with the boy must have a good constitution—his father made two small cuts above the elbow of each arm, into which he rubbed a small portion of the dried venom of the cobra and night adder. Two weeks later his father prepared a lump of venom containing several varieties, and gave him a piece to hold upon his tongue until he felt "funny and shivery". This was repeated twice weekly. Then he was given a piece to swallow. The dose was increased daily until it reached the size of a pin's head, and this dose the informant was still taking every day. The only venom not used in this process was that of the puff-adder, which his father told him rotted the flesh. Men immunized in [759] this way are known as */ao/ga aon*, snake-bite men, and they treat others bitten by snakes. Apart from the regular antidotes and cures already mentioned, they often use the perspiration from their body and clothing, either rubbing it into small cuts made near the bite or mixing it with water which the patient is required to drink. This form of treatment is, of course, reminiscent of that employed in the *!op* diseases.

278 789 For internal and certain other troubles the Hottentots use a great variety of herbs and roots. When any of the roots considered really powerful medicines are dug from the ground, states Mrs. Hoernlé,[2] something has to be given in return, otherwise the root will not act, and similarly when it is passed from person to person a present must also be given. When taking the root, one addresses it with the words: "Ah, there I have dug this, and if you don't help me, [823] harming me rather, I shall throw you into cold water"—another instance, it will be noted, of the protective power of water. Elsewhere Mrs. Hoernlé mentions, by way of example, that the root used in

[1] Laidler, op. cit., 438–9; Schultze, loc. cit.
[2] "Social Value of Water among the Naman," 521.

7: Laidler D-5 (ca. 1925) 1928
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argument, be a good " blood giver." This is an instance of the modern application of ancient sympathetic method.

The further information here gathered together, represents the work of four years' questioning, checking, and corroborating statements made by many herbalists, not a few of whom were also practitioners of witchcraft, that is, practitioners of major qualifications. One took four bottles of water mixed with earth and the ground remains of a certain little red-headed hornet that builds in houses and huts. Before rising each morning he drank a mouthful of the suspension. On the fifth day of this treatment; " there lay the sick people—and there lay the medicines. And now pressed the new power between the shoulders." Here, perhaps, is some small relic of the initiation of a man into the cult of P/gai* aup.

Only occasionally is there a little resemblance between the herbs used by the Native and those of the modern occidental pharmacopoeia. Yet there is a sufficient similarity between them to cause the scoffer to cease his scoffing, and realise that here, after all, lies the root and origin of modern medicine—modern scientific medicine which owes at least one of its drugs to this ancient Hottentot herbal, namely, Buchu. The bitter roots are similar in appearance on cross section, colour of infusion, taste, and action to the Radix Calumbae of modern pharmacy. But, with this one exception, there is no commercial future for any other item. The quantity of most of the herbs and medicinal bushes in the country is but small.

Red substances are used in anaemias and weaknesses, and repeated doses are given during fevers. They are used, several authorities state, because they are red and the blood is red, and therefore they strengthen the blood, and, of course, when grown on red ground, their value as drugs is increased enormously. All such red materials when used and finished with must be disposed of carefully, because good stuff must never be thrown away. Rooi wortle, for weaknesses, Baboon's ear, the Kalkoen bloom, Rooi rainkie, are examples, and in each the reason for use is their colour, and, should they grow in red ground, they must be good. The same principle is expressed in the use of the dark lichen which grows on almost all granite outcrops in Namaqualand, which is used in decoction as a mouth-wash for teething.

Barend makes young people's medicine as the moon grows during the first days of the month, and never prepares any when the moon is on the wane. Yet he always examines cut sections of roots to see if they come from poor ground. He evidently works on a combination of " scientific " and " sympathetic " lines. The same medicine prepared in a different manner may have a different action. Thus, if black root be cut in an upward

*For ease in printing and reading I have denoted the clicks thus :— D/ the dental; P/ the palatal; C/ the cerebral; L/ the lateral and X/ the guttural.

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direction it will act as an emetic; should it be cut downwards it is transformed into a purgative. The Fleer-boom, also, is used in this manner. Purgatives have a strange fascination for the Native, and for pains in the stomach or " fevers " they have been used to " work them out," that is, a tangible removal must always, they argue, be productive of good, for they firmly believe that whatever they suffer is caused by a tangible something.

Rule of thumb methods prevailed in treatment, and the lore was handed down from father to son. In the beginning, man noticed that when he awakened in the morning he felt at his best, worked, or hunted better than later in the day; slackened and grew tired as the sun sank beneath the western horizon. Then he jumped to the conclusion that the rising of the sun was responsible for well-being, growth, and strength; and that the falling, setting sun was responsible for tiredness, failing strength and death. Therefore, the old tooth was thrown towards the rising sun, but a P/gai aup or witch doctor would throw it towards the setting sun to produce an evil effect. A fright was something tangible, and Nama women still by palpation diagnose the presence of a lump, a crystallised fright that has settled in the stomach. They state too, that the woman's " life place " resides on the right side, and that when she is sickly it moves about.

From the details of this herbal lore it appears that the chief medical ailments treated by the Hottentots were pains in the stomach and fevers, classed together as " fires," and distinguished only by locality, flatulence as an entity, diarrhoea, and among the accidental injuries, burns. Several specific complaints had specific treatment. Kolben described the treatment of headache by shaving the head with a sharp knife, leaving furrows between the mounds of hair. If the cause was supposed to be a " wind in the head," then massage was applied to the nape of the neck; and snuff of " dooba," which smells of garlic (asafoetida) was used. A case occurred during 1923 in Namaqualand of scarification of the temples as treatment for madness. Old writers mention this as the means whereby pains were let out. Infantile convulsions must have given the old women much work. A favourite prescription for this complaint was, and still is, Stink kruit leaves, the dried kidney of the D/aie jackal, and the sea bean, whatever that may be. Of these a powder is made which is worked into a linen band (in old days, a strip of hide) and fastened round the neck of the small patient. Small doses are then given internally mixed with mother's milk. The treatment is continued for one moon.

Alternating periods of famine and feast upset many stomachs. When excess was recognised to be the cause of his discomfort, the Hottentot took the juice of aloes in warm broth. The leaves to-day are dried and chopped up as required.

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Toxicology.

825 757 The snake stone has been a famous antidote in all countries. The South Africans imported them from India, but few farmers could afford to purchase this remedy because of the expense. Barrow examined specimens and pronounced them to be pieces of firm bone charred round the edges leaving a white speck in the centre. When thrown into water, a snake stone caused bubbles to rise and this test was a proof of genuineness. It adhered to the snake bite, sucked out the poison, and was cleansed by soaking in water which it turned blue. Country people believed that it was obtained from the head of a snake. 825 The snake stone of the Hottentot is quite a different matter, though it also is believed to be part of a snake. A young Richtersvelder gave this description: "I saw a snake's light. If you see it afar off it looks like a person's fire, but I know that there are no people there. Go nearer, and then it is seen that the light walks about. Then I keep away. I have heard that if a snake's hole be closed with earth that the snake then bites himself to death. Next day the snake stone is found in front of the hole where he dropped it when he went away."

Sam, two hundred miles south of the last informant, says that at night a twinkle is seen on the rocks, and that is a snake stone; and it is seen because the snake is away at the river. Then, to procure the snake stone it is necessary to keep a good look-out, and to approach cautiously with a handful of beast dung, which is to be thrown so that it puts out the light. Thereupon the absent snake becomes blind and cannot see, and can only creep aimlessly to and fro. Next day the dung is picked up and the snake stone, which is the snake's strength, taken away. He is ordinarily a strong-tempered fellow, but after losing his stone he becomes weak, and cannot sit up to bite. The stone is used by the Natives together with bush medicines for poisonous swellings. Probably it is one of the numerous quartz crystals, loose or embedded in the rocks, which occur in profusion all over Namaqualand, and that reflect light at evening time.

278 759 Jacob Klaas, whose father was a full-blooded Nama, is the Poison Doctor for the Northern portion of Namaqualand. He learned his profession from his father, who in his turn had been taught by his father. He states that a boy must be strong to begin with, that is, he must have a good constitution. His father made two small cuts above the elbow of each arm, and into them rubbed a small portion of the dried venom of the cobra and night adder. Two weeks later his father prepared a lump of venom that contained several varieties, and gave him a piece to hold upon his tongue until he felt "funny and shivery." This was repeated twice weekly. Then he was given a piece to swallow. The dose was increased daily until the size of a pin's head was reached. Though now about forty years old, Jacob still takes his daily dose. The only venom

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278 759

not used in this process is that of the puff adder, because his father told him that it rots the flesh.

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The treatment that this man adopts for bites of the cobra is incisions over the bite; he then places a piece of venom in his mouth and proceeds to suck the wound. He also gives the patient a small dose of prepared venom to be swallowed, which he says, congeals the poison inside so that he vomits it out. Puff adder bites he treats similarly.

[224] 278 752

Jacob catches snakes by breaking their backs and so paralysing them; they must not be killed. The head is fixed with a forked stick, after which the snake may be picked up by the back of its neck. The sacs of poison are carefully dissected out, each intact with its fang, from beneath the eyes. The sacs are ligatured at the base of the fangs to prevent the escape of venom. They are then hung up to dry. They are not mixed. Jacob uses no head cloth, and therefore scrapes the greasy, sweated band of his old hat and mixes this with water to give to the patient. This internal dose is given only when it is seen that the poison "has got to the heart," and is given as is the venom, to congeal the injected venom. Either the sweat or the venom will do, both have the same action. He also uses Bo Meester, and gives this drug internally for as long as the patient may be ill, and applies Black Klipsweet or Dassiepis plasters externally. One other old snake catcher gave me exactly the same information.

825 136

The gecko lizard, the D/ung D/ung, is by all, white and black alike, credited with being deadly poisonous. The only poisonous lizard has its habitat in Mexico; but Jacob dissects out some gland and uses it in the same manner as the venom sac of the snake.

278 752

Another Poison Doctor explained his immunity thus; after eating poison the snakes smell the man, do not like him, and run away from him, therefore, spittle and sweat are curative. (The Dutch used to give high prices for pieces of Poison Doctor head cloths.) Here, once again, the sympathy becomes apparent.

In a country that Nature has cursed with multitudes of snakes, spiders, and scorpions, cures and antidotes for their bites and stings naturally form a large section of the folk medicine. Kaboo, a potato-like root, sweet to taste, is used raw, in slices, applied wet to the wound to draw out the poison. Yellow Kafir wood, ground, is used as a poultice. This appears to have a certain caustic action. The crushed head of the snake may be applied as a poultice to snake bite. Bo Meester may be rubbed into scarifications over the bites. Powdered spider or tarantula is used as a poultice over their bites. In the case of scorpion sting the particular animal if possible is captured, its tail pulled off, also its nippers, the body is ground and applied as a paste. In each case of scorpion sting that the writer has treated, the body of the scorpion always accompanied the